

REMARKS

Paper No. 17, the Official Action mailed May 20, 2004, has been carefully studied. The claims in the application are now only allowed claims 4, 5, 11 and 16-18, and objected to claims 10, 12, 13, 19 and 20 rewritten as necessary in independent form, whereby all the claims presently pending should now be in condition for formal allowance consistent with what is stated in the Official Action. Applicants therefore respectfully request favorable consideration and early formal allowance.

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 14 and 15 have been rejected under §102 as being anticipated by Tanaka U.S. patent 5,580,679 (Tanaka). While the rejection is traversed, these claims have now been deleted without prejudice to applicants' rights, including those rights provided by §§120 and 119, to pursue those claims in a continuing application without any penalty whatsoever.

For the record, Tanaka shows a metal foil 7 having a layer of polymer material 12 for sealing an opening extending through a ring 11. The periphery of the polymer-metal foil laminate is pinched between the ring 11 and portion of the sealing plate 10, with the metal foil 7 abutting the ring 11.

The metal foil is not bonded to the ring 11, contrary to the present invention.

Claims 4, 5, and 16-18 have been allowed.

Accordingly, the applicants understand that these claims are deemed by the PTO to define novel and unobvious subject matter under §§102 and 103 over any known prior art.

Similarly, claims 10, 12, 13, 19 and 20 have not been rejected over any prior art, and have only been objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, the Office Action indicating that these claims "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form...." Applicants accordingly understand that these claims also are deemed by the PTO to define novel and unobvious subject matter under §§102 and 103. Claims 10, 19 and 20 have now been rewritten in independent form placing these claims in condition for formal allowance. Claims 12 and 13 depend from and incorporate the subject matter of claim 10, and therefore should also be in condition for formal allowance.

Applicants believe that all issues have been addressed and resolved above, whereby the present application should now be in condition for formal allowance consistent with what is stated in the Official Action. Accordingly,

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early formal allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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